



INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL BUSES

Social Distancing and Capacity

- The number of students on the bus should be a maximum of **67%** of standard capacity.
- Allow only one child on a seat at a time to the extent possible.
 - To allow up to 67% capacity, some seats may be occupied by two students but only if they belong to the same household. The first uses of two students on a seat should pair household members together on the seat.
 - Three students on a seat should not occur.
 - As feasible, consider increasing the number of buses in use to decrease the number of seats with double occupancy.
- Consider use of assigned seats which remain consistent, in order to facilitate the spreading out of students as much as possible and the seating of household members together as necessary. Alternately, may consider an adult monitor on the bus to ensure appropriate seating is occurring.
- As possible, load the bus back-to-front.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Each bus shall be cleaned then disinfected using an EPA-approved disinfectant twice per day after completion of morning and afternoon routes.
 - The disinfectant may be applied manually to seats, seat belts, portions of windows that students may touch, handrails, and driver's seat and controls.
- Frequently wipe down with disinfectant frequently touched surfaces, including those in the entrance touched by passengers, such as handrails, and those touched by the driver.
 - Disinfect with a [product that is EPA-approved](#) for use against the virus that causes COVID-19, [diluted bleach solution](#), or alcohol solution with at least 70% alcohol.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method, contact time, and personal protective equipment).
- Ensure adequate supplies to support frequent cleaning and disinfection practices.

Ventilation

- Increase air exchange on the bus and the input of outside air via available mechanisms, including opening the roof vents and some windows as weather and safety allows.
 - For buses with air conditioning, increasing circulation of outside air should still be performed to the extent possible, since the air conditioning on these buses only recirculates interior air.
 - Recognize that frequent openings of the door will also increase air exchange.



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Personal Prevention Practices

- Masks are required by [Federal Order](#) on school buses and other forms of public transportation in the United States. Drivers and passengers must wear face masks or cloth face coverings that cover the nose and mouth while on public school buses/ transportation.
 - Cloth face coverings should not be used on children under two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
 - The CDC has a [pattern](#) and a [video](#) available demonstrating how to make a cloth face covering.
 - **Note:** Although [Executive Order No. 2021-34, Section I](#) provides an option for parents, guardians, legal custodians, foster-care providers, or other representative authorized to provide consent for or on behalf of a student in any South Carolina public school to opt out of any face covering requirement imposed by any public school official or public school district in South Carolina, the aforementioned Federal Order supersedes the Executive Order. Drivers and passengers on public school buses and other public transit must wear face masks or cloth coverings.
- Drivers may wear disposable gloves, but they should be optional and are not routinely recommended unless for cleaning and disinfecting. Frequent use of hand sanitizer is more strongly recommended, with care being taken not to spill any on the floor of the bus when using.
 - If gloves are used, they should be changed when soiled or damaged or after touching something outside of the driver's controls. Used gloves should be disposed of in a lined trash can, and hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing them.
 - Care should be taken not to touch one's face or mask/face covering while wearing gloves, and if this occurs, the gloves should then be changed.

Messaging to Parents

- Educate drivers and students and their parents on the [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 and the importance of staying home if they have any of the symptoms or if anyone in their household tests positive for the disease.
- Frequently send a message to parents via a variety of methods the importance of social distancing, including not allowing students to congregate at bus stops.
- Translate messaging to appropriate languages.



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References

- DHEC COVID-19 webpage: scdhec.gov/covid19
- What Bus Transit Operators Need to Know About COVID-19 (CDC): cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/bus-transit-operator

This is consistent with guidance available as of June 4, 2020 and may be updated as new information on this novel virus and evolving situation become available.